

Safer Sex During COVID-19

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.

Symptoms of human coronaviruses may be very mild or more serious, such as:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

How is COVID-19 transmitted?

COVID-19 is spread from an infected person through:

- Respiratory droplets from coughing or sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands

COVID-19 and Sexual Transmission

- The primary mode of transmission during sex is close personal contact and touching objects or surfaces that contain the virus (skin, sex toys, sheets, etc.)
- The virus is present in the saliva of people who are infected, and can be transmitted through kissing
- The virus is present in the feces (poop) of people who are infected, and may be transmitted through rimming (mouth on anus)
- Right now, it is unclear if the virus can be transmitted through sexual fluids

Safer Sex During COVID-19

- You are your safest sex partner – masturbation will not spread COVID-19
- If you currently live with your sexual partner(s), there is no evidence of increased risk of COVID-19 from having sex with them
- Consider using your phone for video chats, phone sex, and sexting (with consent!) instead of physical contact
- Consider only having sex with one person at a time, and limiting sexual partners
- Avoid kissing and sexual positions with close face to face contact
- Use barriers like condoms, sex dams and gloves to reduce the chances of spreading COVID-19, as well as STIs
- Before and after sex, wash your hands, wash your sex toys, and consider taking a shower
- Avoid sex if you or your partner(s) are feeling unwell

Continue to Access Sexual Health Services

You can still access testing and treatment and birth control during COVID-19. Phone your doctor or health care provider to schedule an appointment; or visit a community health clinic.

Questions?

Sexual health questions can be emailed to: thefactsoflife@serc.mb.ca. Questions will be answered within two business days.

Additional Resources

For more information on COVID-19, visit:

- <https://www.catie.ca/en/covid-19-resources>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
- <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/index.html>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>
- <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>
- <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/familydoctorfinder/>
- <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/primarycare/index.html>

Note: There is currently little research on COVID-19 and sexual transmission. This Facts Sheet may be updated as more information becomes available.